

CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 31, 2003

TO: City Council

FROM: Kevin C. Duggan, City Manager
Linda Forsberg, Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 4, 2003 STUDY SESSION—COUNCIL GOAL-SETTING

PURPOSE OF STUDY SESSION

The purpose of this study session agenda item is to provide the City Council with an overview of the Council goal-setting process used in the past and seek Council input regarding any desired modifications to the process to be used for the upcoming FY 2003-04 goal-setting process.

BACKGROUND

Each year, as part of the annual City budget development process, the Council develops a list of major City goals for the upcoming fiscal year. The adoption of such goals serves important purposes in identifying and communicating City Council priorities to staff and the community and also aligning projects and initiatives with adequate budget resources.

The identification of such major City goals also assists staff in appropriately developing work plans, including staff time allocations, for the upcoming fiscal year.

COUNCIL GOAL-SETTING PROCESS

The annual Council goal-setting process typically begins in February/March with a goal-setting workshop/study session. At this workshop, Council and staff generally follow the process/steps outlined below:

1. Discuss and identify the status of the goals that have been adopted for the current fiscal year as well as any new significant issues or challenges that have come up

during the current fiscal year that have been added to the list of goals or that have required a significant amount of staff time/resources in order to address.

2. Determine which goals need to be carried over into the following year for continued progress/completion and if any of the carryover/continuing goals can be considered "discretionary" (i.e., goals that are not as time-critical to complete or that have less direct or significant service level impacts).
3. Review a list of potential new initiatives/goals to undertake during the upcoming fiscal year.
4. The Council then preliminarily ranks or prioritizes the list of potential goals for the upcoming fiscal year, including any carryover goals and new initiatives/goals.*

This ranking/prioritization process typically includes the following ranking exercises by the City Council.

- The Council ranks the continuing goals (including discretionary continuing goals) for the upcoming fiscal year. Each Councilmember is allotted a certain number of ranking "votes" to be used to identify the continuing goals they believe are the highest priority continuing goals to carry over to the new fiscal year. Usually, the distribution of the "votes" among the various continuing goals shows that certain goals are clearly more of a priority than others. The number of top vote-getting goals in this ranking process will vary from year to year, depending on the amount of Council consensus.
 - The Council then conducts a similar ranking process for any new initiatives/goals that have been identified for the upcoming fiscal year.
 - The Council has, upon occasion, opted to conduct a final "forced ranking" round at this workshop to determine the initial list of potential goals for the upcoming fiscal year. During the "forced ranking" process, Councilmembers rank all the top vote-getting goals against each other on an individual basis.
5. As part of the last two goal-setting processes, the Council has also reviewed and discussed a list of "potential outcomes" or completed projects the Council and staff anticipate having in place/operation two or five years in the future. This discussion of "potential outcomes" provides Council and staff with a longer-range view of major City initiatives.

* Many annual goals are also established by the Council through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Council review of the City's CIP is scheduled for discussion in March or April.

The information collected at the goal-setting workshop is then compiled into an initial list of proposed goals for the upcoming fiscal year. During this compilation process, staff may identify certain proposed goals that require further clarification/refinement from the Council and/or additional Council discussion regarding their relative priority to other goals and existing workloads because adoption of the proposed/desired goals will require staff resources beyond what can be reasonably provided by the impacted City department(s).

These goals, along with the overall list of proposed major City goals for the upcoming fiscal year, are then presented to the City Council in a second goal-setting workshop/study session sometime in the April/May time frame. At the second goal-setting session, the Council:

- Reviews and comments on the overall list of goals.
- Provides additional clarification to staff regarding certain goals so that there is a clearer understanding of the goals and work plans can be developed by staff for the implementation/execution of the goals.
- Prioritizes/reprioritizes the proposed list of goals, taking into consideration staff's and the budget's capacity to complete those goal items.

The final step in the Council goal-setting process is Council adoption of the major City goals for the upcoming fiscal year as defined by the Council in the two previous goal-setting workshops. The adoption of the major City goals for the upcoming fiscal year typically takes place at a regular City Council meeting in either May or June and provides the direction to staff to begin developing work plans that allocate the necessary staff and financial resources to undertake the City Council's priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

CONCLUSION

The annual identification and prioritization of major City goals is an integral part of the process to develop a comprehensive work and financial plan for the upcoming fiscal year.

City Council input is requested at this time regarding any potential modifications to the Council goal-setting process so that the upcoming process for FY 2003-04 meets the needs of the Council as it faces a very challenging budget year ahead.

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